



Health and Safety
Leadership requirement for construction and maintenance
October 2012

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Guidance and clarification on any aspect of this document may be obtained upon request from the [Highways Agency's national health and safety team \(NHST\)](#).

1 Introduction

1.1 Highways Agency approach to health and safety

In 2010 we launched our vision [aiming for zero](#) where we set out our aim that “as an employer, designer and leading client, nobody comes to harm as a result of working for us”. This health and safety leadership requirements document (HSLR) sets out what we expect of our staff, suppliers, utility providers and stakeholders in demonstrating leadership to deliver health and safety excellence to protect the health and ensure the safety of all those involved in our construction and maintenance activities.

The commitment of Agency staff and the commitment of all parties associated with the delivery of the construction and maintenance programme, working together to meet the letter and spirit of the HSLR, will ensure effective management for the benefit of all. It is intended that these principles be communicated to, and adopted by all Agency staff, suppliers and stakeholders. In particular it is important that they are cascaded to second and third tier suppliers.

1.2 Highways Agency health and safety commitments

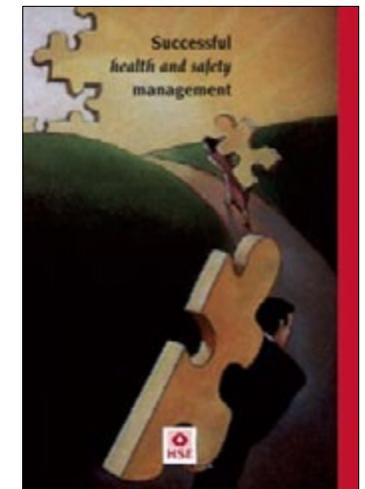
The Highways Agency commits to demonstrating leadership by taking the following actions:

- provide visible leadership from the chief executive, executive group and senior agency managers to demonstrate the strategic importance of health and safety
- continually aim for health and safety excellence in our own activities
- promote exemplary health and safety performance from consultants and suppliers, supporting them at their health and safety events and on site safety tours
- set standards for occupational health performance that reduce risks to health and that promote a healthy working environment
- ensure that health and safety is a regular agenda item for executive group meetings during which health and safety performance will be reviewed and decisions taken upon appropriate actions to address any weaknesses identified
- include health and safety as a standard agenda item at team, divisional and directorate meetings
- appraise the performance of our senior managers in a manner which includes an assessment of their contribution to health and safety performance
- provide competent health and safety advice and ensure that procedures are in place to implement any new legal requirements, and
- ensure that adequate resources are provided to deliver these commitments and to take executive group decisions which are consistent with them.

1.3 Supplier commitments

The Agency expects its suppliers to make their own commitments to health and safety and to consistently act in the spirit of these requirements by working in a manner which encompasses most or all of the following:

- demonstrate a high level of commitment to health and safety by active engagement with [aiming for zero](#)
- demonstrate exemplary standards of health and safety performance and management whether in design, construction or testing and commissioning
- ensure systems are in place to identify hazards and to implement mitigation measures to reduce risk for all parties affected to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP)
- demonstrate mechanisms for continuous improvement in safety performance, in accordance with the principles within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publication entitled [Successful health and safety management](#)
- set high standards of health and safety performance and behaviour. Directors and managers should lead by personal example
- ensure that persons for whom they are responsible are aware and accurately informed of their own health and safety responsibilities and accountabilities
- challenge poor health and safety performance and personally take action when they see a breach of rules or unsafe working practices, however small. Directors and managers are also expected to ensure others within their influence behave in a similar way
- ensure that a purposeful communication system is established between themselves and their workforce. Directors and managers are also expected to visit and inspect workplaces personally on a regular basis
- ensure that suppliers support and comply with any health and safety improvement plans, audits, visits or inspections by bona fide representatives of the Agency
- gather and share health and safety information and data to the benefit of all involved
- co-operate in incident investigation and follow-up of incidents to identify root causes and lessons learned, and
- take part in and personally contribute to health and safety events, meetings and campaigns, including Agency people-based behavioural safety programmes in support of our [aiming for zero](#) philosophy. It is expected that directors and managers will contribute to inspections, incident reviews, health and safety forums and Agency site safety tours.



2 Organising for health and safety

2.1 Communication

The Highways Agency is committed to delivering exemplary levels of health and safety performance. Where examples of health and safety excellence are identified within the activity of any of the involved parties, these will be communicated widely so that benefit may be derived across the Agency's maintenance and construction activities.

The Agency also takes very seriously the commitment to avoiding injuries and learning from any near miss events to improve health and safety performance, as reflected in the setting of explicit accident and ill health management aims in support of our [aiming for zero](#) philosophy.

The Agency's suppliers should respond promptly if a senior representative of the Agency (typically a director identified as responsible for the work) needs to meet and discuss any notifiable/reportable event, adverse trends or other evidence of a breach of these requirements. Similarly, the Agency commits to meet with any director from suppliers where they have health or safety matters that they wish to raise with the Agency.

2.2 Health and safety leadership

All organisations working directly for the Agency or under the control of an Agency supplier shall either utilise the [aiming for zero](#) programme or an Agency approved equivalent that meets the Agency's minimum standards. This ensures effective training that will allow employees in positions of leadership to positively reinforce safe behaviours that prevent injuries, and to coach/ discuss at risk

behaviours that may contribute to injuries or incidents.

The [aiming for zero](#) philosophy is supported by twelve elements each of which builds from a foundation of statutory compliance and robust governance. This has been developed into the Highways Agency [Safety Excellence Wheel](#) which shall be used by the Agency's suppliers as a basis for self assessment and improvement in health and safety. ([There is more information in section 2.6](#))

The leadership teams of the Agency's suppliers should ensure they are familiar with the content of the health and safety commission/ institute of directors publication entitled [leading health and safety at work](#) which sets out an agenda for the effective leadership of health and safety. Its essential principles are:

- Strong and active leadership from the top:
 - Visible, active commitment
 - Establishing effective downward communication systems and management structures
 - Integration of good health and safety management with business decisions.
- Worker involvement:
 - Engaging the workforce in the promotion and achievement of safe and healthy conditions
 - Effective upward communication
 - Providing high quality training.

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- Assessment and review:
 - Identifying and managing health and safety risks
 - Accessing and following competent advice
 - Monitoring, reporting and reviewing performance.

The extent to which these organisations have processes in place to embed the publication’s good practice guidance will be checked and confirmed by the Agency periodically.

In addition, directors and senior managers should be aware that they can attract personal liability and be subject to prosecution under the [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#) section 37 in circumstances where they have consented or permitted an offence committed by their employer, or where that offence is attributable to any neglect on their part.

2.3 The Highways Agency [aiming for zero](#) culture and principles

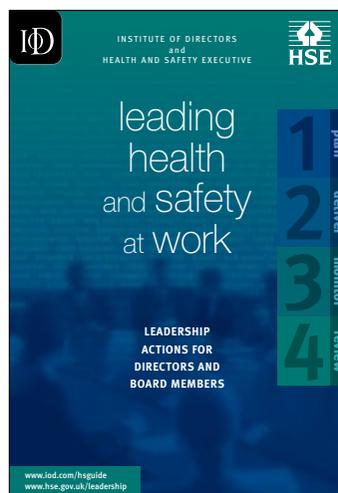
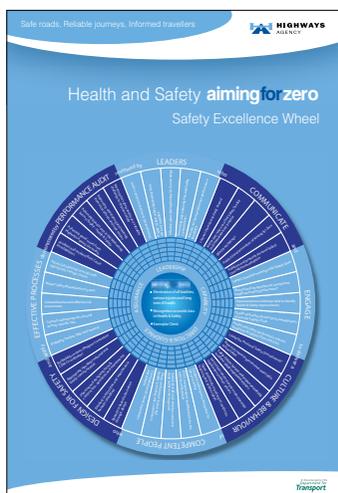
Health and safety leadership within the Agency has been identified as key to successful delivery of its maintenance and construction programme. Having a strong health and safety culture is a vital ingredient in achieving effective delivery and requires commitment by all involved.

The Agency will promote appropriate measures to create, embed and sustain an effective health and safety culture. This will include, the encouragement of near miss reporting, the use by suppliers of Agency sponsored safety climate tools and other employee satisfaction measures such as behavioural safety, benchmarking, recognition and other mechanisms.

All personnel engaged in the Agency’s maintenance and construction activities, regardless of affiliation, shall be regarded as being responsible for ensuring they follow the foundation of the [aiming for zero](#) philosophy in all their work activity.

All managers and supervisors, regardless of affiliation, have a role to play in delivering the strongest of health and safety cultures across all the work of the Agency. The following list illustrates the expected leadership behaviours:

- demonstrating active engagement with the [aiming for zero](#) philosophy and approach
- setting high standards of health and safety performance and behaviour



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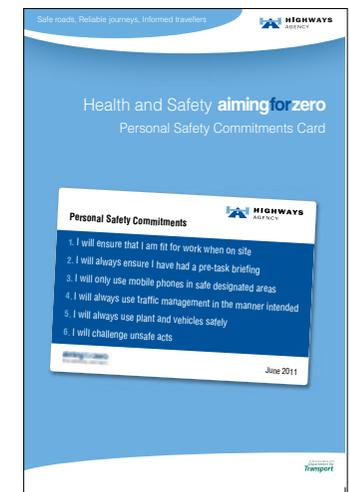
- ensuring that persons for whom they are responsible are aware and accurately informed of their own health and safety responsibilities and accountabilities
- challenging poor health and safety performance and personally taking action when they see a breach of rules or unsafe working practices, however small
- maintaining awareness of all Agency and suppliers' occupational health and safety policies, rules, standards and performance targets that affect their activities and promoting the importance of such matters to their colleagues
- providing a purposeful and clear communication system between themselves and their workforce
- ensuring compliance with, and support of health and safety plans, audits, visits or inspections by bona fide representatives of the Highways Agency
- taking part in, and personally contributing to health and safety events, meetings and campaigns, and
- promoting and implementing a people-based behavioural safety programme in support of our zero harm philosophy.

2.4 Personal commitments

In support of the [aiming for zero](#) approach, the Agency has, in partnership with its supply chain, developed a suite of [Personal Safety Commitments](#) that apply to everyone involved in the project.

The Agency will make available, copies of the personal safety commitments cards for use and display by suppliers at their worksites. There is also a set of seven posters aimed at highlighting the commitments which will also be supplied by the Agency for display on worksites. Suppliers shall ensure that the personal safety commitments form a key part of induction and ongoing training of all their operatives. The suppliers' management and supervisors shall routinely check their employee's knowledge of the personal safety commitments and reinforce this through their own actions and behaviour.

The personal safety commitments shall be applied firmly and fairly. Breaking these personal safety commitments is considered a serious issue and for those responsible could lead to their removal from the worksite.



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2.5 People-based behavioural safety programme

Suppliers are expected to actively co-operate with the Agency in promoting improved health and safety performance through behavioural safety measures in support of [aiming for zero](#). These measures should ideally be aligned with any existing approaches of the supplier and aimed at influencing desired behaviours and the effective communication of health and safety information. The Agency, in partnership with its supply chain, has developed the [Highways Agency health and safety behavioural standards](#) and these shall be used in all the Agency's construction and maintenance work.

2.6 Highways Agency health and safety excellence wheel

The Highways Agency [Safety Excellence Wheel](#) and supporting documentation provides project teams, including Agency staff, with a self assessment tool to reflect the current status on site and record the scores agreed. The emphasis is on improving performance and therefore an honest and self critical approach should be used. Future team performance will be measured on the rate of improvement, not the absolute position, with the exception that no one should be below a defined minimum standard.

Supporting documentation can be found on the Agency's website and consists of the [Safety Excellence Matrix](#) and [Safety Excellence Scoring Sheet](#). Further help and advice on the use of these tools is available from the [NH&ST](#).

3 Occupational health

3.1 Overview of approach

The Agency believes that an exemplary standard of occupational health across its maintenance and construction programme is essential in delivering its objectives and can have a positive effect on workforce health where actively managed. In support of this approach, the Agency has, in partnership with its supply chain, outlined minimum [occupational health standards](#) and these shall be achieved on every project.

3.2 Alcohol and drugs

There is a mandatory alcohol policy that applies to all who work on or visit the Agency's maintenance and construction programme sites. No alcohol shall be consumed by personnel on sites or in offices, nor shall any personnel report to work whilst under the influence of alcohol. Anybody found in possession of illegal drugs will be reported to the police and removed from site.

All personnel who are safety critical and are under any form of prescription medication shall advise their principal contractors occupational health service provider without delay and comply with any direction given.

The supplier shall also ensure that adequate processes are in place to allow the Agency to undertake "for cause" drugs and alcohol testing of any operative where it is deemed necessary as part of an investigation. (See also, for information, Part 4 of the [Employment Practices Data Protection Code](#) published by the Information Commissioner's office).

The Agency has detailed policies concerning alcohol, drugs and illegal substances and these are reflected within the Agency Highways Agency [occupational health standards](#).

4 Monitoring

4.1 Site safety tours

The Agency's board expects senior agency and senior managers from all organisations working on the Agency's maintenance and construction projects to demonstrate personal leadership by undertaking regular site safety tours. Senior managers from principal contractors and their suppliers are also invited, and encouraged, to contribute actively as a part of our shared determination to deliver health and safety excellence in support of the [aiming for zero](#) activity across the programme.

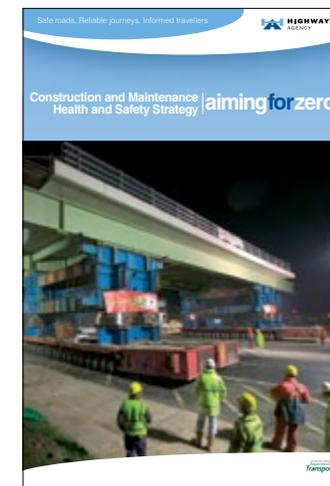
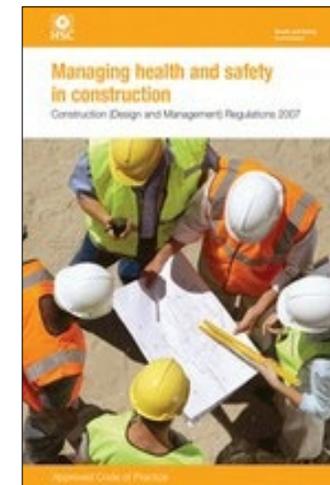
5 Conclusion

By working together in compliance with the principles detailed in these requirements, the Agency and our suppliers will be well placed to deliver a programme that meets our [aiming for zero](#) expectations for exemplary health and safety in construction and maintenance. This is the ultimate aim of the Agency team.

Annex A

All Agency staff involved in construction and maintenance activity and all suppliers should also be aware of the contents of the following documents:

- [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#) (HASWA 1974)
- [Managing health and safety in construction](#) (Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 approved code of practice)
- [Successful health and safety management](#) (HSG65)
- [Leading health and safety at work](#) (Health and Safety Executive/ Institute of Directors 2011)
- [Highways Agency aiming for zero strategy](#) (Highways Agency 2010)
- [Construction and Maintenance Health and Safety Strategy](#) (Highways Agency 2011);
- [Highways Agency health and safety behavioural standards](#) (Highways Agency 2010)
- [Highways Agency occupational health standards](#) (Highways Agency 2010)
- [Design for maintenance](#) (IAN 69/05)
- [Implementation of Construction](#) (Design and Management) 2007 (IAN 105/08)
- [Highways Agency Supply Chain Health and Safety Incident Reporting Requirements](#) (IAN 128/12)
- [Highways Agency Safety Excellence Wheel](#) (Highways Agency 2011)



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